
A New Name and a New Combination in East African *Erica* (Ericaceae: Ericoideae)

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ABSTRACT. A new name is proposed for *Erica excelsa* (Alm & T. C. E. Fries) Beentje, which is a later homonym of *E. excelsa* Tausch. In addition, a new combination in *Erica* based on *Philippia mafiensis* Engler is proposed.

Oliver (1987, 1988, 1989, 1991, 1992, 1993) has made a persuasive case for placing the polyphyletic *Philippia* Klotzsch in synonymy under *Erica* L. *Erica*, however, is a large genus with horticultural interest and there are many names in the literature. Not surprisingly, one of the combinations recently proposed by Beentje (1990), *E. excelsa* (Alm & T. C. E. Fries) Beentje, is a later homonym of *E. excelsa* Tausch. A new name for this species, which occurs in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania, is proposed here.

***Erica rossii* Dorr, nom. nov.** Replaced name: *Erica excelsa* (Alm & T. C. E. Fries) Beentje, Utafiti 3(1): 13. 1990, non *Erica excelsa* Tausch, Flora 1834(38): 596. 1834, nec *Erica excelsa* Hort. (= × *Erica spuria* Andrews, sec. Dulfer, 1965: 152). Based on: *Philippia excelsa* Alm & T. C. E. Fries, Kungl. Svenska Vetenskapssakad. Hand. ser. 3, 4(4): 41. 1927. **TYPE:** Kenya ("Kenia"). Mount Kenya, R. E. Fries & T. C. E. Fries 1387 (holotype, UPS; isotypes, B destroyed, BR, K, S).

The epithet honors Robert Ross (b. 1912) of The Natural History Museum (London) who began his studies of tropical African Ericaceae more than 30 years ago.

The identity of *Erica excelsa* Tausch is problematic. Guthrie & Bolus (1905: 315) included it among their "Supposed Hybrids." Dulfer (1965: 140) also included it among a list of names of uncertain application, but suggested that it should be compared to *E. ventricosa* Thunberg. Resolution of its identity awaits examination of type material.

Preparation of a book, *Kenya Trees, Shrubs and Lianas* (Beentje, in prep.), led Beentje (1990) to propose new combinations in *Erica* based on the

East African taxa of *Philippia*. His focus on Kenya caused him to overlook *P. mafiensis* Engler, which occurs on the islands of Mafia and Pemba in Tanzania. This species also should be transferred to *Erica*.

***Erica mafiensis* (Engler) Dorr, comb. nov.** Basionym: *Philippia mafiensis* Engler, Bot. Jahrb. Syst. 43: 367, t. 1, A–E. 1909. **TYPE:** Tanzania. Mafia Island ("Insel Mafia"), W. Busse 417 (lectotype, selected here, G; isolectotypes, B destroyed, EA—2 sheets).

The lectotype was chosen from among the syntypes.

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